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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/648,633	08/27/2003	Aiko Matsuda	32739M085	3901
441	7590	06/29/2007	EXAMINER	
SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL			QIN, YIXING	
1850 M STREET, N.W., SUITE 800				
WASHINGTON, DC 20036			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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			06/29/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/648,633	MATSUDA ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit		
Yixing Qin	2625		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 August 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 27 August 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ . 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

I. Claims 1 and 2 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown (U.S. PG Pub. No. 2004/0095587)

Regarding claim 1, Brown discloses an image forming apparatus, comprising:
setting section to be used by a user for setting, as a copying mode, a writing space mode in which a document image in a preset number are printed on a half of a single paper sheet, thus forming a writing space on the other half of the paper sheet, (Fig. 5 shows a picture one on half and other text information on the other half of the printed sheet – this can be considered as a sheet having an image area and a writing area for text images) and

image forming section for printing the document image in the preset number on a half of a single paper sheet when the writing space mode has been set as a copying mode. (Fig. 5 – note that various other combinations are possible in Figs. 2-7)

Brown does not explicitly disclose call any mode a writing space mode.

However, brown notes in the background in P[0025] that various machines can embody Brown's invention, including a multifunction device with copying capabilities. The use of a setting section, such as a control panel, in various copying or multifunction devices is well-known. See also P[0056]

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have set a mode called a writing mode.

The motivation would have been to make it for convenient for an user by making the writing space copying mode a quick mode for the production of a sheet with a predetermined layout.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to use Brown to obtain the invention as specified.

Regarding claim 2, Brown discloses an image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the setting section includes means to be used by a user for setting whether or not a page separating line is put on the paper sheet when the writing space mode has been set (Figs. 2-7, P[0056]) , and

the image forming section includes means for printing a page separating line at each boundary between adjacent document images printed on a paper sheet and at each boundary between a document image printed on the paper sheet and the writing space when the writing space mode has been set as a copying mode and it has been set to put a page separating line. (Figs. 2-7 shows various ways to divide the images using separating lines).

II. Claim 3 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown (U.S. PG Pub. No. 2004/0095587) in view of Powerpoint (<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint/ HA010348091033.aspx>)

Regarding claim 3, Brown discloses ways to print multiple pages on a sheet.

It does not explicitly disclose "the setting section includes means to be used by a user for setting whether or not rules are put in the writing space when the writing space mode has been set, and

the image forming section includes means for printing rules in the writing space formed on the paper sheet when the writing space mode has been set as a copying mode and it has been set to put rules in the writing space."

However, Powerpoint discloses in Fig. 2 of the example layouts and the description of this figure, that there can be lines printed for users to add comments. This applies to both Powerpoint 2002 and 2003, which were already produced prior to the filing of this application.

Brown and Powerpoint are combinable because both allow users to print multiple pages on a single sheet.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have allowed the printing of lines on a page for user comments.

The motivation would have been to make it easier for users to write comments.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Brown and Powerpoint to obtain the invention as specified.

III. Claim 4 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown (U.S. PG Pub. No. 2004/0095587) in view of Nakagiri (U.S. Patent No. 6,501,562)

Regarding claim 4, Brown discloses an image forming apparatus, comprising: consolidation mode setting section for setting, as a copying mode, a consolidation mode in which a preset plurality of documents are consolidatedly printed on a single paper sheet and in which a separating line is put at each boundary between adjacent document images on the paper sheet, the consolidation mode being arranged such that the printing area of a paper sheet is divided into sub-areas of which number corresponds to the preset document number, and that each document image is printed in each sub-area; (Figs. 2-7, P[0056])

Brown does not explicitly disclose "means for judging each pair of two adjacent sub-areas of the printing area of a paper sheet whether or not both two adjacent sub-areas of each pair result in blank portions when the consolidation mode has been set by the consolidation mode setting section and the number of documents to be printed on a single paper sheet is smaller than the preset number;

image forming section for forming, on a single paper sheet, an image in which a plurality of documents are being consolidatedly assembled and in which a separating

line is being put at each boundary between adjacent document images when the consolidation mode has been set as a copying mode; and

the image forming section including comprising means arranged not to put a separating line at the boundary between two adjacent sub-areas when the judging means has judged that these two adjacent sub-areas result in blank portions."

However, Nakagiri discloses in Fig. 4C and column 9, line 66 – column 10, line 13 that blank logical pages can be inserted so pages can be properly printed. Brown also shows in Figs. 2-7 show various ways to print boundaries.

Brown and Nakagiri are combinable because both are in the art of printing multiple pages on a single page.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have determined where blank pages are to be and to not draw separator lines between them.

The motivation would have been to allow the pages to be printed properly. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Brown and Nakagiri to obtain the invention as specified.

Conclusion

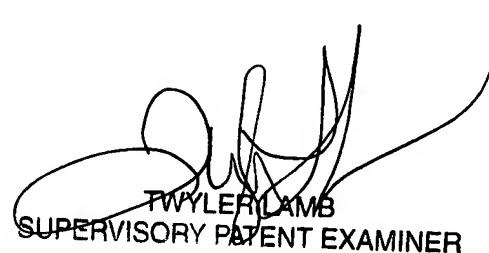
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yixing Qin whose telephone number is (571)272-7381. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Twyler Lamb can be reached on (571)272-7406. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



YQ



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